



*Photo: (Center) Welding Fabrication Chairman Karl Watson talks to Mareike and Troy Yocum about the grills donated to Active Heroes.*

# **2014 SkillsUSA KY**

## **Welding Fabrication Competition**

### **Prizes donated by ESAB, Lincoln Electric and Miller**

### ***Grill project donated to Active Heroes***

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*Written and layout by Fran Dundon  
Photos courtesy of Tim Thornberry  
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When long time welding fabrication chairman Karl Watson found out SkillsUSA KY was going to help the Active Heroes organization, he immediately offered assistance because of the value he places on the veterans of our nation. With this in mind, he created a grill project that would serve a useful purpose and set a goal of getting all the materials donated. According to Watson, when the people he contacted found out who the beneficiaries of the project would be, donations were not difficult to obtain.

This year, welding fabrication teams were put to the test – not only from a competitive standpoint, but a patriotic standpoint as well. Competitors knew the grills were being donated to the Active Heroes Retreat for veterans and their families to use. Somehow that information gave each team member a little extra initiative and effort to produce the best welding skills possible.

In addition to all of donated supplies for the project, ESAB, Lincoln Electric and Miller provided grand prizes for the first through third place team members. It was an awesome opportunity for good welding competitors to walk away with arm loads of prizes and feel satisfied that they were helping America's veterans.

### **Supplies for grill project donated by:**

**Travis Mattingly, Caldwell Tanks: sheet steel**

**Martin Shearer/Mark Bastin, Somerset Pulaski Co. Dev. Foundation: 3" Schedule 40 Pipe**

**Travis Skelton, SBR Machinery Movers, LLC: Floor Grate**



## A worthy cause . . . A great donation



**Karl Watson**  
**Welding Technology**  
**Somerset Community College**

***“As the son of a Korean War Veteran, I was personally very pleased to be able to contribute in a small way to a very worthwhile endeavor such as Active Heroes. Veterans give so much for this country and any chance that we have to pass on a token of our appreciation - it should be taken.***

***“I’d like to thank everyone who made it possible to construct and donate the park grills. I thought this year’s contest was probably the highest quality project this contest has produced and, I think it was that way because the contestants took extra pride in their work this year knowing the grills were going to the Active Heroes Retreat for veterans.”***

**Yocum:**

***“Active Heroes is thrilled to work with SkillsUSA to help with our military family retreat! The experience has been amazing to see so many young adults helping to build picnic tables, grills and planter boxes that will be used by thousands of veterans and their families. We can't thank the wonderful people with SkillsUSA enough for their support of our American heroes!”***

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For more information regarding Active Heroes, please visit: <http://www.activeheroes.com>



## ESAB recognized on stage for generous prize donations



***Photo, (l to r): ESAB Territory Sales Managers Todd Harris, (West Region) and G. Scott Jennings, (South Region) are recognized on stage during SkillsUSA KY opening ceremony.***

***ESAB donated approximately \$14,000 worth of prizes and supplies for the following secondary and postsecondary competitions: Welding Fabrication, Welding 1, Welding, and Welding Art Sculpture.***

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***For more information regarding ESAB, please visit: [www.esabna.com](http://www.esabna.com)***



# 1<sup>st</sup> Place Welding Fabrication Team: Green Co. ATC

**Steven Thomas, Instructor**

*"What a great honor – my students won first place in the welding fab contest and won the sportsmanship award too. It's very satisfying to know that your students listen to what you have to say as well as master the skills you try to teach them. In my classroom, respect is taught from day one. Another primary concern of mine is that my students learn to be kind to everyone they come into contact with because one day that may be the person who will hire them."*

*"Sponsorship of competitions is great and we all want to thank ESAB and Lincoln Electric for the outstanding prizes our team won. And, I'd like to say thank you to ESAB for the extra supplies provided to us so that we can practice for the national competition. It's amazing how much hardware these students brought home."*

**Green Co. ATC TeamWorks Team:**

*"We were very excited and thankful for all the prizes and gifts we won at the state conference. Thank you to all of our sponsors."*

*"It wasn't until after the competition and on the way home that we realized we were the best in the state. We are so proud to be representing the state of Kentucky at the national level. And, we were told we won the sportsmanship award for loaning out our tools and helping the people we were competing against so they could finish their product."*

*"Finally, knowing that the product we were building was going to help those who make it possible for us to have the freedom to do all we do made it that much more important for us to do our best."*



**First Place Sportsmanship Award – Prizes donated by Lincoln Electric**



## **2<sup>nd</sup> Place Welding Team: Fleming County High School**

***Bobby Pease, Instructor  
Fleming Co. High School:***

***"ESAB and Lincoln Electric truly know and prove what it is to be dedicated to the future of welding. It is the experiences of welding in a contest under pressure and in a different welding booth that will make these young men successful in a field that literally hires based on the exact same scenario. I am proud to be a part of an industry that takes the time to prepare and invests resources in the youth."***

***Kegan Dales:***

***"Placing 2nd in the SkillsUSA State welding fabrication contest was an amazing accomplishment for me. The prizes earned will truly advance my education and skill in the field of welding. The entire experience is one I'll remember for the rest of my life."***



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***Photo, back row: G. Scott Jennings, ESAB. Front row (l to r):  
Kegan Dales, Dalton Grayson, and Dalton Gray***



# 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Welding Fabrication Team - Rockcastle Co. ATC

**Sherman Cook, Instructor  
Rockcastle Co. ATC:**

***“My students were so excited to receive the prizes for their participation in the Welding Fabrication contest. We are extremely grateful to ESAB and Lincoln Electric for their enthusiastic support of our students at all levels of competition. Their commitment to our programs and students has been consistently generous, even through these hard economic times.***

***“Again, I would like to personally thank Lincoln Electric and ESAB for their support of Kentucky’s Welding programs.”***



***Photo, front row: G. Scott Jennings.  
Back row, (l to r): Justin Barron,  
Bryan King, and Ryan Moore***

**Ralph Baker, Principal  
Rockcastle Co. ATC:**

***“I am so glad our students have the opportunity to compete in KY State SkillsUSA contests. Often the state trip has been the longest distance, the best motel, nicest restaurant and biggest event most our students have ever participated in. The great professional volunteers who donate their time and now all the scholarships, prize money and gifts mean a great deal of all of us – it’s just great. RATC students have great stories and memories to last them a lifetime!”***



**Karl Watson  
Welding Technology  
Somerset Community College:**

***“James Phelps, Aaron Franklin, and Curtis Causey couldn’t have been more pleased with the prize packages they received, especially the ESAB ox-weld torch, Lincoln bag, and Miller PPE. Thank you to our prize sponsors. Our students benefitted because of your donations.***

***“And, all these men were happy to be involved in such a worthy cause because they know their grill will be used by American veterans.”***



**Photo, back row: Scott Jennings, ESAB. Front row, (l to r): Curtis Causey, James Bradley Phelps, and Aaron Franklin.**